

TOR

N A P A V A L L E Y

CUVÉE TORCHIANA
BERESINI VINEYARD
CHARDONNAY
2023

WINEMAKER JEFF AMES' NOTEBOOK:

VINEYARD This wine comes from a single three-acre Chardonnay vineyard Larry Hyde introduced to Tor in 2008. It belonged to one of his oldest friends in the Napa Valley, Steve Beresini, and was planted three decades ago with cuttings Larry gave Steve. We call this plant material - Hyde Selection Wente Clone. Larry Hyde claims it is the shyest-bearing clone he has propagated. Today it produces a minuscule crop in Steve's vineyard, usually between one to two tons per acre. The clusters are half the normal size of an average Chardonnay cluster, but the density and richness of the wines produced from these small clusters are undeniable.

WINEMAKING The 2023 Beresini Vineyard Chardonnay comes from the 30+ year-old Wente clone vines in Carneros. As we normally do, this is whole-cluster pressed with no juice settling, so we go to the tank dirty and to the barrel dirty. The wild yeast kicks in about 7-10 days later and takes around 2 weeks to go dry. At the end of fermentation, the wild malolactic (ML) fermentation starts and will take another several weeks to a few months to complete. Once we're about a month away from bottling, the wine is put into a tank at 50 degrees to settle out, allowing the lees and solids to settle naturally, so we can go to bottle unfinned and unfiltered.

WINEMAKER'S TASTING NOTES The 2023 Beresini vineyard shows honeysuckle, violet, and notes of oyster shell (think white Burgundy) minerality. On the palate, this is medium in weight with great length, and perhaps a little bit more silky than in previous years. The acidity in this wine is incredibly well integrated. It is there, and you can perceive it because of the freshness on the palate, but it is not something that stands out. I tend to view Beresini as a wine to be served with heavier seafood, like crab and butter. However, this year's version is more of a wine to be paired with sushi or shrimp (shrimp tempura would be perfect).

VINTAGE The 2023 vintage was similar to the 2018 vintage in terms of how cool it was, how long the growing season lasted, and how late it started. Over the years, I've become a bigger fan of these late and cool vintages because of the complexity they seem to build into the wines. The key to 2023 was not "panic picking" just because the season was so much later than normal, but rather waiting it out until the fruit reached the ripeness and sugar levels it needed to harvest. A great Napa Valley vintage.

